



Environmentally Friendly Classrooms

Clean classrooms not only look nice but also provide a healthy environment in which to learn. A clean environment enhances learning by removing many allergens, irritants and toxins. Students learn better if they are not ill or suffering asthma or allergy symptoms.

Staff and students can assist with cleanliness by practicing what is called “**environmentally friendly classrooms**”.

Here are some suggestions:

- ✓ Remove unused items from the classroom. If you have not used material in a year then consider removing that material from the classroom.
- ✓ Remove all fleecy furniture. Most of these items harbor an abundance of allergens and dust mites.
- ✓ Rubber backed rugs over carpet can trap moisture in the carpet. Rugs that breathe may be used but these must be moved to allow for adequate vacuuming and cleaning of the carpet.
- ✓ **No** scented candles, candle warmers, diffusers, plug-in deodorizers, or room spray. These can easily trigger an asthma attack.
- ✓ Store all needed items in cleanable plastic tubs with lids.
- ✓ Have the students clean out desks on a routine basis.
- ✓ Do not bring animals to the classroom. Animals should be only temporary visitors to the classroom and then as part of the curriculum.
- ✓ Plants should be in glazed ceramic or plastic containers to control moisture seepage. Try not to over water and be cautious when fertilizing.
- ✓ Rotate or clean mobiles and wall displays on a routine basis, as these will collect dust.
- ✓ Clean and organize your personal work space. Custodians may not be able to move or disturb your desk and other personal items.
- ✓ **Do not bring items from home.** Remember that items like bug spray, spray paint and a host of other products can contain toxic materials and these can contribute to an unhealthy school environment.

To assist with cleaning:

- ✓ Have students place their chairs on their desks at the end of the day.
- ✓ Have students move tables to one side of the room which will make vacuuming easier and faster.
- ✓ Have students pick up garbage off of the floor so custodians can focus on vacuuming.
- ✓ Consider having students help with dusting on days the custodian is not scheduled to dust. Make sure you are using micro fiber rags that will pick up the dust, not stir it around.

These simple steps will contribute to the overall performance of students and lessen the possibility of asthma and allergy symptoms.

While we encourage the use of these practices, please check to make sure that they follow the policies, procedures, and protocols within your district.